

Message Text

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FROM REINHARDT

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR RH UK

SUBJECT: RHODESIA CONFERENCE: TANZANIA ADOPTS A HARD LINE

1. JOHN REINHARDT CALLED ON IVOR RICHARD EVENING NOVEMBER 17 TO REVIEW WITH RICHARD THE DAY'S EVENTS AND REINHARDT'S CONSULTATIONS WITH THE NATIONALISTS. AT THE END OF THE CONVERSATION, TANZANIAN OBSERVER SALIM TELEPHONED RICHARD.

2. WHILE REINHARDT LISTENED, SALIM TOLD RICHARD THAT HE HAD JUST RECEIVED CATEGORICAL INSTRUCTIONS FROM NYERERE IN LAGOS STATING THAT NYERERE HAD CHANGED HIS MIND AND HAD DECIDED THAT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT MUST STAND FIRM AND INSIST THAT BRITAIN AGREE TO MARCH 1, 1978 AS THE DATE OF INDEPENDENCE, NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENED IN RHODESIA DURING THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION. SPECIFICALLY, EVEN IF THE LEGISLATIVE AND CONSTITUTIONAL PROCESSES WERE NOT COMPLETED AND EVEN IF ELECTIONS WERE NOT HELD, BRITAIN MUST BE HELD TO DECLARING INDEPENDENCE BY MARCH 1.

3. RICHARD TOLD SALIM THAT HE COULD NOT ACCEPT NYERERE'S POSITION. BRITAIN COULD NOT AGREE TO A FIXED DATE OF INDEPENDENCE UNLESS THERE WAS A
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PRIOR AGREEMENT THAT THE CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL

PROCESSES, INCLUDING ELECTIONS, WOULD HAVE TO BE COMPLETED BY THAT DATE.

4. SALIM REMINDED RICHARD THAT HIS INSTRUCTIONS LEFT HIM NO LATITUDE AND THAT HE HAD BEEN CHARGED WITH CALLING THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AND TELLING THEM TO STAND FIRM. NYERERE'S INSTRUCTIONS TO SALIM ENJOYED THE FULL SUPPORT OF THE NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT. RICHARD TOLD SALIM THAT IF TANZANIA WON THE DAY AND THE PATRIOTIC FRONT HELD FIRM, THE CONFERENCE WOULD BREAK UP. SALIM REPLIED THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THAT BUT COULD DO NOTHING TO CHANGE THE INSTRUCTIONS. HE COULD NOT EVEN RETURN NYERERE'S CALL.

5. AFTER FINISHING HIS CALL WITH SALIM, RICHARD TOLD REINHARDT THAT HE HAD HAD A FIRM UNDERSTANDING THAT NYERERE HAD FOUND THE NOVEMBER 15 CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT TO BE MOST REASONABLE. IN SHORT, NYERERE HAS REVERSED HIS COURSE IN FULL KNOWLEDGE OF FACT THAT HIS NEW POSITION COULD LEAD TO A BREAKUP OF THE CONFERENCE.

5. RICHARD HAD INTENDED TO MEET THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AT 09:00 LOCAL TIME, NOVEMBER 18. DURING THAT MEETING, HE PLANNED TO TELL NKOMO AND MUGABE THAT BRITAIN WOULD SEEK TO BRING THE CONFERENCE TO A CLOSE ON DECEMBER 20 AND WAS PREPARED TO MAKE AN ANNOUNCEMENT TO THAT EFFECT. HE HAD HOPED THAT BY ANNOUNCING BRITAIN'S WILLINGNESS TO FIX A DATE FOR THE END OF THE CONFERENCE, HE WOULD HAVE, IN EFFECT, SATISFIED THE PATRIOTIC FRONT'S DEMAND THAT A BASE DATE FOR INDEPENDENCE BE SET. HE HAD FELT THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO MAINTAIN A POSITION OF TOTAL REASONABLENESS AND MEET EVERY LEGITIMATE POINT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AND THE FRONT LINE OBSERVERS RAISED. RICHARD WILL HOLD HIS 09:00 MEETING WITH NKOMO AND MUGABE DESPITE SALIM'S REPORT WHICH HAS MOST CERTAINLY BEEN PASSED TO THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. RICHARD GAVE HIS STAFF INSTRUCTIONS TO CALL CHONA AND MOGWE AND
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CONFER WITH THEM ABOUT SALIM'S CONVERSATION. RICHARD WILL BE IN TOUCH WITH US AS SOON AS HIS MEETING WITH NKOMO AND MUGABE IS OVER.

6. COMMENT: RICHARD WAS, TO SAY THE LEAST, DEJECTED AND FELT THAT HE HAD BEEN BETRAYED BY NYERERE. IF NYERERE'S INSTRUCTIONS HOLD, IT IS DIFFICULT TO SEE HOW RICHARD CAN CONTINUE CONSULTATIONS

WITH THE RHODESIANS, MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE ON
THE FORMATION OF AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT. HE
HAD HOPED TO SAY THAT THE ISSUE OF THE INDEPENDENCE DATE
WOULD BE REVIEWED SHORTLY BEFORE THE CONFERENCE'S TERMINA-
TION ON DECEMBER 20. AS SOON AS WE HAVE THE RESULTS OF
HIS MORNING MEETINGS WITH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT, WE WILL LET
YOU KNOW HOW HE PLANS TO PROCEED AND GIVE YOU OUR
RECOMMENDATIONS. AT FIRST BLUSH, IT APPEARS
THAT NYERERE HAS REVERTED TO FORM AND DECIDED
TO BACK THE MOST EXTREXZIPA POSITION. ABRAMS

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